



STEVENAGE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
for the year
1953.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS:

District Medical Officer of Health (and Divisional Medical
Officer for North Herts. Area):

VICTOR R. WALKER, M.B., Ch.B., B.Sc., D.P.H.
Divisional Health Office,
12, Brand Street,
Hitchin.

(Telephone: Hitchin 1757)

Sanitary and Housing Inspector:

HORACE FODEN, Cert. R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,
Council Offices,
Orchard Road,
Stevenage.

(Telephone: Stevenage 436)

Council Offices,
Orchard Road,
Stevenage,
Herts.

Telephone: Stevenage 436-7-8.

NORMAN M. PRIESTLAND, A.C.I.S., D.P.A (Lond.) - Clerk of the Council.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b30174284>

To the Chairman and Members of the Stevenage
Urban District Council.

I beg to present the above report prepared in accordance with the directions
of Ministry of Health Circular 1/1954.

SECTION A.

LOCAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres)	....	....	5,895(change of boundary at 1.4.53)
Home Population - Mid 1953 (Registrar General's Estimate) - Constructed for revised boundary	....	....	11,170
Number of inhabited houses at 31.3.54.			4,038
Rateable Value (1st April, 1954)	....		£81,764
Sum represented by a penny rate 1954-55			£377

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR
THE YEAR 1953.

LIVE BIRTHS.

	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Stevenage Urban District</u>	<u>Comparable rate for England & Wales</u>
Legitimate	267	137	130		
Illegitimate	10	7	3		
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		
All	277	144	133		
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		
Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population				.24.8.	.15.5.

DEATHS.

	<u>86</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>41</u>		
Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population				.7.7.	.11.4.

STILLBIRTHS.

Legitimate	3	1	2		
Illegitimate	-	-	-		
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		
All	3	1	2		
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births				.10.7.	.22.4.

DEATH RATES OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.

All infants per 1,000 live births			.28.9.	.26.8.
Rate for Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births			.30.0.	
Rate for Illegitimate " " " illegitimate "			.0.0.	
Actual number of such deaths (a) <u>under</u> and (b) <u>totals under</u>				
		<u>4 wks.</u>	<u>under 1 yr.</u>	
Legitimate		7	8	
Illegitimate		-	-	
		<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	
Deaths from Puerperal Causes	....	....	-
Deaths from Cancer (all sites)	....	....	16	
Deaths from Measles	....	....	-
Deaths from Whooping Cough	....	....	-
Deaths from other infective and parasitic diseases			-	

Comment on Vital Statistics.

With total live births for the year now more than three times the local figure for deaths, Stevenage is seen in the last two to three years to have become a 'young' town. The local death rate for the year of 7.7 (identical with the 1952 figure) reflects the much younger than average age distribution of the present population, and the Registrar General supplies a comparability factor of 1.26 which produces a standardised death rate of 9.7 (England & Wales 11.4). The estimated population for mid.1953 of 11,170 is already obsolete by reason of the present rate of inward migration of population.

The local infant mortality rate for the year (28.9) approximated to that for England and Wales (26.8) while the stillbirth rate (10.7) was well below the national figure (22.4) indicating a continued favourable environment for young children and efficient welfare services.

The following table shows the main local vital statistics over the ten years 1944-53:-

	<u>Birth Rate</u>	<u>Death Rate</u>	<u>Inf. Mort. Rate</u>
1953	24.8	7.7	29
1952	20.8	7.7	6
1951	18.4	10.4	16
1950	14.0	10.5	-
1949	16.9	13.1	18
1948	16.2	10.4	29
1947	18.5	12.1	26
1946	16.9	12.7	9
1945	14.5	10.9	22
1944	16.8	12.1	54

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

During the year a weekly Infant Welfare Centre was opened in temporary premises in the Bodwell Area.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

The Town is supplied with water from a temporary station operated at Whitchall which consists of a 36" diameter borehole 340 feet deep in the chalk, with a 120h.p submersible pump, 90 feet below the surface.

The water is conveyed through a 24" diameter rising main, some 4 miles in length from Whitchall to Stevenage Pinn Green Reservoir which has a capacity of 2 million gallons.

From this reservoir a constant and normal supply of water is distributed by main to 4,023 houses (approximate population 11,125) while 15 houses (approximate population 45) are supplied by private wells.

Private Wells.

Four samples of water were taken for bacteriological examination and 3 were found satisfactory and 1 unsatisfactory. The well from which the unsatisfactory sample was taken was condemned and closed.

51 samples of water taken by your Sanitary Inspector were submitted to the Luton Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological examination and 88 samples by Messrs. Rideal, Rideal & Sciver, London, for bacteriological examination.

Summary of samples submitted for bacteriological examination to the Luton Public Health Laboratory.

	<u>No. of samples</u>	<u>Highly Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
Whitchall: Chlorinated water	51	51	-

Summary of samples taken for bacteriological examination by Messrs. Rideal, Rideal & Sciver, London, on behalf of the Stevenage Development Corporation.

<u>Description.</u>	<u>No. of samples</u>	<u>Highly satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
Whitchall: Raw water	20	19	1
Whitchall: Chlorinated water	45	43	2
Pinn Green Reservoir, Stevenage	23	22	1

Chemical Analyses

6 samples were taken and found correct.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Total number of inspections for all purposes 1213, divided as follows:-

Defects under the Housing Acts	393
Defects under the Factories Act	28
Prevention of Infectious Diseases including disinfection & disinfection	44
Sanitary conditions of schools, public halls, cinemas and public houses	15
Inspections under the Milk & Dairies Order (including farms)	38
Inspection of slaughterhouses, butchers' shops, vans and food stores	104
Meat & Food Inspections	5
Miscellaneous Food Inspections	17
Prevention of nuisances	104
Inspection of drainage etc. - houses	19
" " " " - trade premises	15
Inspection of Town's Water Supply & Water smpls.	51
Inspection of Private Wells & Water Samples	3
Inspection re Insect Infestation	22
Inspection under the Food & Drugs Act -	
(i) Ice-cream	60
(ii) Ice-lollies	10
(iii) Dried Egg	13
(iv) Restaurant kitchens	42
(v) Preparation Rooms	40
Inspections re smoke observations	14
Inspections re Shops Act	2
Inspections re Moveable Dwellings	126
Inspections re Rag Flock & Other Filling Materials Act	4
Inspection - Suspected Food Poisoning	5

Miscellaneous.

Inspections re storage of petroleum	32
Inspections re Employment Agencies	2
National Assistance Act - Disposal of Dead Bodies	5

Sewage & Sewage Disposal.

The Town is provided with a foul sewer 24" diameter leading to bacterial treatment at the Stevenage Disposal Works and a 36" surface water sewer discharging into a water-course, both of which are satisfactory.

Refuse Collection and Disposal of Salvage.

House refuse collection, the disposal of same and the cleansing of the Town is supervised and carried out by the Surveyor. The refuse is disposed of by semi-controlled tipping.

Smoke Observations.

14 smoke observations were taken and during each period no nuisances occurred.

Petroleum (Consolidation) Act, 1928.

27 premises are licensed for petroleum, carbide of calcium etc. and the regulations are satisfactorily complied with.

SECTION D.

Housing.

Routine house-to-house inspections were carried out at 216 houses, viz. 88 private and 128 Council Houses.

During the year 855 houses were erected, viz. 44 by the Stevenage Urban District Council and 806 by the Stevenage Development Corporation and 5 by private enterprise.

Housing Act - Prevention and Abatement of Overcrowding.

During the year no houses were found overcrowded.

Sanitary improvements were undertaken in existing dwellinghouses, viz:-

Premises re-drained	5
Sanitary improvements including drainage	31
Other work for the abatement of nuisances	71

7 formal and 112 informal notices were served upon owners of property.

Vermineous Premises.

4 houses were treated for vermin which were eradicated by spraying with a liquid vermin mixture named Zaldecide while inspection of furniture, bedding, etc. was carried out by the Local Council.

SECTION E.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH IN RESPECT OF THE YEAR, 1953, FOR THE URBAN DISTRICT OF STEVENAGE IN THE COUNTY OF HERTFORD.

PART I OF THE ACT.

1. INSPECTIONS for the purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	21	20	-	-
(2) Factories not included in (1) above in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	55	29	8	-
(3) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises)	15	4	-	-
TOTAL	91	53	8	-

2. CASES in which DEFECTS were found.

	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S.2)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)					
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)					
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)					
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	-	-	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-

PART VIII OF THE ACT - OUTWORK.

Number of Outworkers 1, i.e. Wearing Apparel. (Sections 110 & 111).

Inspection and Supervision of Food etc.

MILK.

There are only 7 registered producers of milk in the district from which the milk is collected and pasteurised before distribution.

In addition there are five registered retailers from whom milk is produced outside the Stevenage district, 2 being licensed for the sale of Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised), 2 for Pasteurised and Sterilised and 1 for Pasteurised.

39 samples of milk were taken for bacteriological examination which gave the following results:-

<u>Description.</u>	<u>No. of samples</u>	<u>Passed</u>	<u>Failed</u>
Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised.)	1	1	-
Pasteurised	38	36	2

ICE-CREAM.

At present there are no manufacturers of ice-cream in Stevenage.

60 samples of ice-cream were taken for bacteriological examination from retailers, restaurants, etc. and the following summary shows the provisional grading:-

	<u>No. of samples</u>	<u>Grade 1.</u>	<u>Grade 2.</u>	<u>Grade 3.</u>	<u>Grade 4.</u>
1953	60	43 (71.66%)	10 (16.66%)	3 (5%)	4 (6.66%)
1952	62	28 (45.16%)	27 (43.54%)	7 (11.29%)	-
1951	60	26 (43.33%)	21 (35%)	8 (13.33%)	5 (8.33%)
1950	69	42 (60.87%)	17 (24.63%)	6 (8.69%)	4 (5.79%)
1949	43	13 (30.23%)	12 (27.90%)	8 (18.60%)	10 (23.25%)
1948	25	3 (12%)	12 (48%)	2 (8%)	8 (32%)

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

There are 4 licensed private slaughterhouses (including one knackers' slaughterhouse) in the District which are kept up to a fair standard. Only occasional slaughterings licensed by the Local Food Officer are carried out, amounting in all to 6 pigs of which the carcasses were inspected.

Food surrendered as unfit for human consumption in shops, stores, etc. have to be certified before replacements can be made. During the year the following amount of food was condemned as unsound and unfit.

Meat (English)	27 lbs
Meat (Imported)	164 lbs
Fish	95 lbs
Tinned Ham	2 lbs
Tinned Meat	33 lbs
Other tinned food	112 lbs
Flour	108 lbs
Confectionery -	
sweets	112 lbs
Total	<u>653 lbs</u>

CLEAN FOOD CAMPAIGNS.

The approximate number of food premises is summarised as follows:-

Fishmongers	7
Fried Fish	4
Butchers	12
Bakers	3
Confectioners	5
Grocers	18
Greengrocers	5
Hotels	8
Restaurants	7
Canteens	12
Total	<u>81</u>

Food & Drugs Act, 1938,
(Section 14)

The number of food premises registered under this Act is 34, viz.

Fried Fish	4
Ice-cream	18
Butchers	12 and under the

Milk & Dairies Regulations

1949

Dairies	2
Total	36

Inspections.

122 inspections were made at various food premises and personal advice was given on food hygiene.

Disposal of condemned food.

Small quantities of food were disposed of at the Council's refuse dump and large quantities of meat were returned to a centralized depot (from which it was received) and thence dehydrated.

FOOD POISONING.

There was only one suspected case of Food Poisoning in your District during the year.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Total notifications of infectious diseases during the year (after correction) were: whooping cough 141, measles 79, scarlet fever 19, acute poliomyelitis 4 (3 paralytic and 1 non-paralytic) acute pneumonia 14, puerperal pyrexia 2 and erysipelas 1.

Whooping cough showed marked prevalence in the second and third quarters while the incidence of measles and acute pneumonia fell mainly in the first quarter. Scarlet fever cases fell mainly in the fourth quarter with a rather scattered distribution and an incidence almost wholly among children just under the age of school entry or attending infant school classes. There was no evidence of spread within school classes.

The four cases of poliomyelitis were of scattered distribution in time, age and locality; detailed enquiry failed to trace either direct or indirect connection, suggesting a much more widespread and symptomless distribution of the casual infection among the local population during the late summer and early autumn. Each case is made the subject of confidential enquiry for the investigation by the Medical Research Council.

Diphtheria was again absent from the area for yet another year. Despite its long continued absence from the district the offer of infant protection by immunisation continues to be accepted by a large majority of parents.

TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases & deaths during the year 1953.

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respiratory M	F	Non-Respiratory M	F	Respiratory M	F	Non-Respiratory M	F
0 - 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	2(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 25	3(3)	4(3)	-	1	-	-	-	-
25 - 35	7(3)	7(7)	-	(1)	-	-	-	-
35 - 45	3(2)	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 55	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
55 - 65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
AND OVER	3	1(1)	-	-	1	-	-	-
TOTALS	18(9)	15(11)	-	2(1)	1	-	-	-
Deaths allocated by the Registrar-General after final transfers					-	-	-	-

NOTE:

The above figures of new cases include inward transfers from other areas which figure is also indicated separately in brackets.

It will be noted that inward transferred cases make up a high proportion of the totals, particularly among females. It would therefore appear that some families containing a 'quiescent-stage' case chose New Town residence for reasons of the improved housing contribution to health. Subtraction of figures in brackets gives the number of new cases notified during the year within the resident population.

The one (elderly male) death from respiratory tuberculosis is withdrawn from the area by the final allocation of the Registrar General.

In conclusion, I would acknowledge having received every help from your chief officers and particularly would I acknowledge the most valuable help received from your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. H. Boden, who has been responsible for compiling the Sanitary sections of this Report.

Your obedient Servant,

Victor R. Walker,

District Medical Officer of Health.

May, 1954.

